

FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY POLICIES

Objectives :

Library policies should describe and support the mission and operation of an equitable, inclusive library program.

Characteristics :

Effective library policies are:

- *Context-specific:* They are written for a specific community at a specific point in time and reflect a deep understanding of the community’s assets and needs.
- *Explicit:* Equity and inclusion are referred to explicitly as foundational values and as rationales for individual policies.
- *Equitable:* They account for disparities and take into consideration the lived experiences of youth and their families / communities.
- *Collaborative:* They are developed by a team of library stakeholders, including BIYOC.
- *Youth-Centered:* They prioritize the needs and interests of youth.
- *Compassionate:* They are positive rather than punitive.

Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p>Context-Specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library policy document includes a mission statement that is specific to the community served by the library ➤ Library policy document includes current data about the population served by the library, and/or references a current community analysis document <p>Explicit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library policies explicitly reference diversity, inclusion, and equity as foundational values and as rationales for relevant individual policies 		

Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Materials selection policies include criteria related to diversity and equity (for example, positive reviews by reviewers of color) ➤ Materials selection policies include non-traditional selection tools that focus on diverse titles, for example We Need Diverse Books or Rich in Color <p>Equitable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library policies are developed with attention toward their potential impacts on BIYOC and their families and other marginalized communities, such as youth experiencing homelessness <p>Collaborative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library policies are developed collaboratively; BIYOC are given an opportunity to provide feedback on the policies <p>Youth-Centered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library policies recognize and respect the needs of all children and teens to socialize and “hang out” ➤ Library use policies allow for movement of furniture, support collaborative work, and permit conversation. <p>Compassionate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library policies are positive, not punitive (they do not focus on potential “bad behavior” by library users) ➤ The library does not charge fines for late materials 		